

1. (Previously Presented) A method for determining a selection vector which represents a displacement vector for a displacement of an image area from a first position in a first image to a second position in a second image, the method comprising the steps of:

- a) Supplying a set of prediction vectors;
- b) Supplying a set of test vectors;
- c) Selecting at least one test vector from the set of test vectors, and performing an image comparison between a first image area in the first image and a second image area in the second image to obtain an image comparison result, where a position of the second image area is displaced relative to the first image area by the at least one selected test vector;
- d) Comparing the at least one selected test vector with at least one selected prediction vector to obtain at least one vector comparison result for each selected test vector;
- e) Supplying at least one quality characteristic for each selected test vector from both the image comparison result obtained for each selected test vector, and from the vector comparison result for each selected test vector;
- f) Determining a ranking order of the quality characteristics; and
- g) Selecting one of the selected test vectors as the selection vector from the set of test vectors based on the ranking order of the quality characteristics.

2. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, where one set of test vectors is assigned to each prediction vector or to one group each of the prediction vectors, where the step of comparing utilizes the test vector set to compare at least one selected test vector from the test vector set with at least one selected prediction vector.

3. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, where the step of comparing determines a measure of a difference between each of the selected test vectors and the at least one selected prediction vector.

4. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, where step c) is implemented for all the test vectors.

5. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, where step d) is implemented for all the prediction vectors.

6. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of linking the image comparison result for a selected one of the test vectors and the vector comparison result for a selected one of the prediction vectors, where the quality characteristic improves the less the selected test vector and the selected prediction vector differ from each other.

7. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of determining at least one test vector for each prediction vector, and where the selection vector is selected from a plurality of the test vectors determined thereby.

8. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, where steps c) through f) are performed at least twice, where according to step g) at least one test vector is selected based on the ranking order of the quality characteristics, and where at least one test vector in a set of selected test vectors is generated for the subsequent image comparison in step c).

9. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 8, where during the steps c) through f) one test vector is determined for each prediction vector, and where a set of test vectors is generated for the subsequent image comparison in step c).

10. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 8, where from the selected test vector selected according to step g), one test vector of the set of test vectors is generated for the image comparison in step c) by vector addition with at least one modification vector.

11. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 10, where from the selected test vector selected according to step g), multiple test vectors are respectively generated by vector addition of multiple modification vectors.

12. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 11, where with each repetition of steps c) through f), the modification vectors employed match in terms of their direction and the absolute value of the modification vectors become smaller in subsequent iterations of steps c) through f).

13. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 11, where the modification vectors are a function of the determined quality characteristic supplied for the selected test vector.

14. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 13, where an absolute value of the modification vector becomes smaller as the quality characteristic improves.

15. (Cancelled)

16. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of supplying a set of selection vectors as a function of a set of prediction vectors and a set of test vectors.

17. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising the step of storing the selection vectors as new prediction vectors.

18. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 1, further comprising the steps of presetting or modifying the selection vectors according to a random scheme, and storing the preset or modified selection vectors as new prediction vectors.

19. (Previously Presented) A method for determining a selection vector which represents a displacement vector for a displacement of an image area from a first position in a first image to a second position in a second image, the method comprising the steps of:

iteratively selecting a test vector from a set of test vectors, and iteratively performing an image comparison between a first image area in the first image and a second image area in the second image to obtain an image comparison result;

iteratively comparing the selected test vector with a prediction vector to obtain a vector comparison result;

iteratively supplying a quality characteristic for the selected test vector from both the image comparison result and from the vector comparison result;

determining a ranking order of a plurality of quality characteristics; and

selecting one of the test vectors as the selection vector based on the ranking order of the quality characteristics.

20. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 19, further comprising the step of linking the image comparison result for a selected one of the test vectors and the vector comparison result for a selected one of the prediction vectors, where the quality characteristic improves the less the selected test vector and the selected prediction vector differ from each other.

21. (New) A method performed in a processor for determining a selection vector which represents a displacement vector for a displacement of an image area from a first position in a first image to a second position in a second image, the method comprising the steps of:

a) selecting at least one test vector from a set of test vectors, and performing an image comparison between a first image area in the first image and a second image area in the second image to obtain an image comparison result, where a position of the second image area is displaced relative to the first image area by the at least one selected test vector;

b) comparing the at least one selected test vector with at least one selected prediction vector from a set of prediction vectors to obtain at least one vector comparison result for each selected test vector;

c) supplying at least one quality characteristic for each selected test vector from both the image comparison result obtained for each selected test vector, and from the vector comparison result for each selected test vector;

d) determining a ranking order of the quality characteristics;

e) selecting one of the selected test vectors as a selection vector from the set of test vectors based on the ranking order of the quality characteristics;

f) generating an updated set of test vectors which includes the test vector selected as the selection vector; and

- g) repeating steps (a) to (e) using the updated set of test vectors; and
- h) outputting a signal from the processor representative of the updated selection vector.